

## 2023 MEDIA FELLOWSHIP

### About the Nova Institute for Health

The Nova Institute for Health (formerly The Institute for Integrative Health) is a heart-centered think tank that takes action for the good of people, places, and the planet. We look at the *entire lived experience* that influences health.

Our mission is to catalyze new ideas in health, explore the complex network of factors that influence health, and promote the well-being of individuals, communities, and the planet. Our vision is of a world where health is valued as our most basic and essential asset and where people, places, and the planet flourish for the benefit of all.

We work to achieve our mission through four main strategies:

- We support a network of Scholars and Fellows that works across disciplines to investigate critical questions, spark fresh thinking and new ideas, and discover cutting-edge solutions;
- We facilitate innovative forums to tackle the "sticky" issues of our times with fresh, collaborative thinking;
- We develop demonstration projects to address challenging issues that are based on rigorous research and have real-life impact; and
- We conduct outreach so our learnings can reach national and global audiences, create connections, and inspire change.

Our work examines the full spectrum of health, healing, and flourishing through many lenses—including nature, art, nutrition, planetary health, integrative medicine, primary care, light, social determinants, equity, lifestyle, post-traumatic growth, and more.

### Our History

After founding the first U.S. academic health center program for integrative medicine (The Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine) in 1991, Professor Brian Berman, MD, helped ignite and lead a profound change in medical practice that focused on the evidence-based practice of whole person care. With the founding of The Institute for Integrative Health in 2007, this work broadened to look at all the factors that create health or drive illness and the eventual need for medical care.

Professor Berman and his team of thought leaders have since inspired innovative, evidence-based research, strategic partnerships, scientific publications, and action in academic medical centers and communities that have led to significant advances in health and healing.

Over the years, our work and mission encouraged us to think more broadly, considering all of the factors that affect a person's health and how to connect the dots between them. This led us

to expand our focus even further to include individuals, communities, and a planet under stress—and to a renaming of the organization in 2021.

## **Scholars and Fellows**

The Nova Institute's Scholars and Fellows program is a unique, transdisciplinary community of thought leaders that advances new research methods, developing innovative tools and approaches for next generation scientific discovery.

By design, our Scholars and Fellows are from diverse fields—such as medicine, photobiology, atmospheric chemistry, epidemiology, anthropology, and psychology—that rarely, if ever, have opportunities for collaboration. This diversity breaks down traditional barriers, stimulates fresh thinking and new ideas, and leads to partnerships that multiply the impact of their pursuits.

How could nature help veterans suffering from PTSD? How do people move from healing to flourishing? What role can art play in the clinical setting? How can nutrition improve outcomes for underserved communities and better equip medical professionals? How can we protect the intertwined health of our natural resources and our people? These are just a few of the types of questions our Scholars and Fellows investigate—but they don't just ask questions, they find solutions.

## **Nova Media Fellowship**

Acknowledging the need for better public understanding of the connections between the health of people, places, and the planet, we are adding Media Fellows to our Scholars and Fellows program. We hope the Media Fellowship program will increase the number of print and online articles and posts as well as broadcasts that reflect a broad vision of health, are science-based, and accurately report on pertinent ideas, questions, and debates. We seek to embrace solutions journalism, while at the same time combating dangerous mis- and dis-information, which has become a particularly acute problem in health and science communications. We also want to disseminate innovative research and ideas, and evidence-based information, to many different audiences in understandable and engaging formats.

The Media Fellowship program provides journalists an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the complex, intertwined network of factors that affect health and well-being and the inadequacy of a health framework that focuses on disease. Media Fellows can play an important role in translating research findings and analyses for a range of audiences, combining data with stories that inform the public and engage policymakers in order to change attitudes.

The Nova Media Fellowship supports print, broadcast, and digital journalists proposing to immerse themselves in the health field and complete media projects for publication/dissemination that acknowledge and explore the many factors that promote well-being, prevent disease, contribute to healing, and increase an individual's ability to flourish and live a fulfilling life. At this time, the Media Fellowship is not inviting book proposals.

The Media Fellowship program aims to give recipients the time, space, and resources to research, write, and speak about issues that validate and show the importance of an expansive

health framework. Media Fellowships are one year in duration and full-time, allowing recipients to undertake their projects in a comprehensive and creative manner. The Nova Institute strongly prefers that Media Fellows take a leave of absence from any organization where they are currently employed during the fellowship period. Projects begin in fall 2023, no later than December 1; the exact start date is flexible to accommodate individual Fellows.

The award for a Media Fellowship is \$105,000 over 12 months and is all-inclusive. The award is intended to support a fellow's living expenses, project-related expenses, travel, conference fees, health insurance, etc. We will, however, cover any costs associated with attending Nova Institute-organized meetings, workshops, or events. The fellowship does not fund enrollment for degree or non-degree study at academic institutions.

Media Fellows have absolute editorial control over their projects. They agree to include a collaboration credit in each published or broadcast piece developed during the Fellowship, noting that they are or were Media Fellows of the Nova Institute for Health.

### **Part of the Nova Community**

We envision Media Fellows becoming part of our Nova community, and we will help integrate them into our networks and provide resources as they pursue their projects. Nova Institute leadership and staff organize annual conferences and monthly online meetings where our Scholars and Fellows share project findings and recommendations. These inspiring exchanges help the Scholars and Fellows learn from each other's projects and assist each other, referencing relevant work, brainstorming solutions to conceptual or project implementation problems that emerge, providing constructive critiques, and identifying areas for future exploration or collaboration. Fruitful relationships among Scholars and Fellows and with the Nova Institute endure long after award periods have ended.

We work with each Scholar and Fellow, as we will work with each Media Fellow, to support their work and strengthen the design and implementation of their projects so they have maximum impact. For example, the Nova Institute leadership team draws on our worldwide relationships with expert researchers and clinicians to connect Scholars and Fellows to people who could contribute to or benefit from their projects. We also share our own expertise and perspectives and plan to involve Media Fellows in workshops, exhibits, demonstration projects, and other activities as warranted. Media Fellows will also receive training and coaching from the Solutions Journalism Network.

We will also encourage Media Fellows to engage in discussions, join groups, and make connections with others via our online Nova Integration Hub. This web-based forum was created to empower a transdisciplinary community to share new ideas and ways of thinking, put research findings into practice and policy, and spark creativity, collaboration, and solutions for health and well-being.

Our Media Advisory Council—comprising editors, reporters, and others influential in the media field—will provide additional support to Media Fellows, including offering mentorship, responding to requests for advice and introductions, and serving on or helping to shape occasional panels to discuss issues of particular interest to the Media Fellows.

The Nova Institute and members of our Media Advisory Council will host an online orientation for the new cadre of Media Fellows as their term begins in fall 2023. We expect Media Fellows to make every effort to attend our in-person Scholars and Fellows meeting in Baltimore, Maryland, on October 15-17, 2023, even if their term has not officially begun.

## Application Guidelines

### *Project Focus*

At the Nova Institute, we work to change how people think about health, moving away from a narrow focus on disease to an integrated perspective that examines the connections among individual, community, and planetary health. A singular focus on disease, long the dominant health paradigm, fails to recognize the complex network of factors (e.g., genetic, environmental, behavioral, social, economic, spiritual, and psychological), that determines the health and well-being of individuals and communities. And it pays scant attention to the potential of individuals—and the communities and planet in which we live—to thrive.

In contrast, a broad focus on health welcomes an exploration and understanding of the connections among the myriad factors that enhance or diminish an individual's total lived experience. Better knowledge about these factors would help public systems and private institutions improve their priorities, policies, and practices and help individuals to change their behavior and lifestyle.

Applicants for the Media Fellowship have considerable latitude in determining the specific focus of their proposed projects. All proposals, however, should show an appreciation for the multitude of factors, at many levels, that affect health and thriving, and resist reductionist approaches. The Nova Institute will consider proposals that relate to one or more of these goals:

- Increase knowledge of the complex network of factors that prevent illness, contribute to healing, and enable individuals to thrive in healthy communities and on a healthy planet
- Move from a health paradigm focused on disease to a health paradigm that focuses on flourishing and well-being, examining an individual's total lived experience
- Persuade key individuals—from clinicians and nonprofit and business leaders to policymakers—to recognize the multiple factors that affect health and to adopt practices and policies that respond to those factors

### *Health Inequities*

The COVID-19 pandemic made clear the adverse impact of long-standing inadequate and harmful social, economic, and environmental conditions on individuals' health and the inequities that result. The Black Lives Matter and other social justice movements have shined a bright light on systemic racism and the discriminatory policies and practices that cause many of these conditions. Many underserved communities face significant barriers to getting fresh, nutritious, and plentiful food. And the climate crisis and environmental degradation has a disproportionate impact on low-income communities. The Nova Institute welcomes projects that recognize and/or examine the political, historical, and social dynamics that have led to the health inequities experienced by the BIPOC community and people who are medically underserved.

### *Transdisciplinary and Inter-Sectoral Approach*

To understand the many factors that affect health and well-being, and the intertwined connections among them, we champion a transdisciplinary approach and encourage projects that will tap the expertise of multiple disciplines. Given the relationship between good or harmful policies and practices and an individual's ability to thrive, compelling projects may also explore the current or potential role of various sectors—e.g., public, business, medical, and education sectors—in advancing or undercutting health.

## **Eligibility**

### *Experience*

Ideal applicants are full-time journalists with established records of publication or broadcast in local, regional, or national markets or among targeted audiences or constituencies and have relevant full-time experience. For this inaugural year of the Media Fellowship program, we are accepting applications from U.S. based journalists only.

Society and the medical community has for far too long ignored systemic racism, economic injustice, and other factors that affect health and hurt marginalized groups. We believe that these voices must be heard and should be involved in our work, and we strongly encourage applications from people of color, women, LGBTQ+ people, or other members of other historically marginalized communities.

### *Time Commitment*

Fellowships begin in Fall 2023 (ideally by December 1; the start date is flexible), and last for a period of 12 months. A Media Fellow must be able to devote at least 35 hours per week to the proposed project, and the project should be the Fellow's only full-time work during the fellowship term. We will hold quarterly check-ins with Media Fellows and expect Media Fellows to attend annual meetings, including one scheduled for Fall 2023 in Baltimore, Maryland, and participate in monthly online meetings convened by the Nova Institute for the Scholars and Fellows network as well approximately 2-3 other Nova events such as our "Nova Campfires" and annual conference, which are typically held virtually.

### *Project Deliverables*

We recognize the value of flexible support, designed to encourage unbounded curiosity and to allow Media Fellows to follow leads suggested by their research and reflection. Nevertheless, applicants must propose deliverables or products that reflect a year's worth of full-time, ambitious work. In all cases, deliverables must aim to reach the targeted audiences via publication and dissemination during the term of the fellowship. We will not support projects that involve only research that simply lays the groundwork for future use.

## **Application Process**

Journalists interested in being considered for a Nova Media Fellowship should ensure they meet the eligibility criteria listed above and submit an application that consists of a written proposal, resumé, recommenders, and work samples, detailed [here](#).

Applications should be emailed to [mediafellowships@novainstituteofhealth.org](mailto:mediafellowships@novainstituteofhealth.org) no later than **July 5, 2023**.

Four to six finalists will be chosen from the pool of applicants, and we will request confidential letters from the three individuals each finalist has identified to serve as recommenders. A selection committee, comprising Nova Institute staff, Scholars and Fellows, Media Advisory Council members, and other media specialists, will interview each candidate. We will ask finalists to submit additional information or materials to respond to questions raised by their application or interview. The Nova Institute will then select two finalists to serve as our inaugural 2023 Media Fellows.

### *Application and Selection Timeline*

Media Fellowship Announcement:	April 12
Applications Due:	July 5 (11:59 p.m. EST)
Notification for Finalist Applicants:	July 24
Letters of Recommendations Due:	August 9
Finalist Interviews:	July 31-August 11
Notification for Selected Fellows:	August 14
Scholars and Fellows Meeting (in-person):	October 15-17
Fellowship Term Begins:	Fall 2023 (Before Dec 1)

*Note: all dates except the application due date are subject to change at the Nova Institute's discretion.*

Questions? Contact Dawn Stoltzfus, Senior Director of Strategic Communications, at [dawn@novainstituteofhealth.org](mailto:dawn@novainstituteofhealth.org)

### **Nova Institute Media Advisory Council Members**

Virginia Hubbell  
Mark Hyman  
Jackie Judd  
Jayne O'Donnell  
John Schidlovsky  
Rich Stone

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*The Nova Institute for Health is a heart-centered think tank that takes action for the good of people, places, and the planet. Our mission is to catalyze new ideas in health, understand the complex network of factors that influence health, and promote the well-being of individuals, communities, and the planet. A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, the Nova Institute was founded in 2007 by Professor Brian Berman, MD, a pioneer in the field of integrative medicine. Cultivating a broad, transdisciplinary community of thought leaders and partners, the Nova Institute has established an international reputation as a place for exploration and discovery. [www.novainstituteofhealth.org](http://www.novainstituteofhealth.org)*